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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its organizational and substantive sessions of 1995

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report deals with the additional requirements resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its organizational and substantive sessions of 1995. In accordance with paragraph 3 of rule 31 of its rules of procedure, the Council was provided, where appropriate, with a statement of programme budget implications prior to the adoption of the resolutions and decisions.

I. SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED REQUIREMENTS

2. The total requirements cover both substantive and conference-servicing costs, as shown below:

	1996-1997 (United States dollars)
Substantive costs	619 000
Conference-servicing costs	3 004 500
Total	3 623 500

3. The substantive additional requirements by budget section and type of expenditure are as follows:

		Travel of representatives	Consultants	Expert group meetings	Total
Section 7A.	Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development	408 800	-	-	408 800
Section 13.	Crime control	-	24 000	56 000	80 000
Section 21.	Human rights	130 200	-	-	130 200
	Total	539 000	24 000	56 000	619 000

Further details are provided in paragraphs 4 to 26 of the present report by resolution and relevant budget section. A review of alternatives in the event that these estimates were to exceed the balance available in the contingency fund is contained in paragraphs 27 to 30.

II. ANALYSIS OF REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

Resolution 1995/27. Implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention on Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

4. In paragraph 8 of section IV of resolution 1995/27 of 24 July 1995, the Council requested the Secretary-General to initiate a study on issues relating to firearms regulation, including, inter alia, gathering from Member States and intergovernmental and other organizations national data and information on (a) criminal cases, accidents and suicides in which firearms were involved; (b) the situation with regard to transnational illicit trafficking in firearms; (c) national legislation and regulations relevant to firearms; and (d) relevant initiatives for firearms at the regional and interregional levels. The Council further requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its fifth session proposals stemming from the above study on measures to regulate firearms.

5. The above activities would require specialized consultancy services for a period of three work-months in 1996 in order to prepare the study ($24,000) and an ad hoc expert group meeting to be held in 1996, which on the basis of the study would elaborate the recommendations to the Commission in the field of firearms regulation ($56,000).

6. Under the terms of paragraph 8 of section I of the same resolution, the Council decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group within the framework of the Commission to meet during its fifth session to study the feasibility of the establishment of a regional centre, to be based at Cairo, for training and research in crime prevention and criminal justice for the

Mediterranean States. In paragraph 10 of section II of the resolution, the Council also decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group, within the framework of the Commission, to consider at its fifth session measures for combating transnational organized crime, including the drafting of a code of conduct or other legal instrument. By paragraph 4 of section III of the resolution, the Council decided that the open-ended in-sessional working group on United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice would discuss during the fifth session of the Commission the establishment of efficient information-gathering mechanisms on prisons conditions. By paragraph 25 of section IV of the resolution, the Council decided that the open-ended in-sessional working group of the Commission, at its fifth session, would seek ways to develop and undertake practical activities aimed at promoting the effective use and application of United Nations standards and norms in juvenile justice, including training, research and advisory services.

7. The activities of the above-mentioned four thematic open-ended working groups of the Commission would entail conference-servicing requirements for interpretation and translation of documents relating to their meetings, which would be of one to three days duration each. These requirements would amount to $330,000.

Resolution 1995/39. Annual sessions of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

8. In its resolution 1995/39 of 25 July 1995, the Council, noting that the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had consistently needed to hold two annual sessions in recent years in order to cope with its workload and that it continued to be faced with a backlog of reports to be considered, authorized the holding of two annual sessions by the Committee in May and November-December, each of three weeks' duration, in addition to a pre-sessional working group of five members to meet for five days immediately after each session to prepare the list of issues for consideration at the subsequent session.

9. A provision in the amount of $390,700 has been made under section 21 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 1/ for the financing of the activities of the Committee of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This provision is equivalent to the 1994-1995 revised appropriation approved by the General Assembly to accommodate two regular annual sessions and the 1994 extraordinary session of the Committee authorized by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1993/296 and related pre-sessional working group meetings. Travel and subsistence costs are paid for the 18 members of the Committee. The holding of one additional Committee's session and a pre-sessional working group in 1996-1997 would require additional funds in the amount of $130,200 under section 21 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

10. The conference services to be provided to the Committee's additional session would amount to $600,300 under section 26E of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. 1/ The conference services to be provided to

the pre-sessional working group amount on a full cost basis to $432,500. The total conference-servicing requirements under resolution 1995/39 would, thus, amount to $1,032,800.

Decision 1995/226. Establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental panel on forests

Decision 1995/235. Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development

Decision 1995/318. Future sessions of the open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

11. In its decision 1995/226 of 1 June 1995, the Council decided, upon the recommendation of the Commission on Sustainable Development, to approve the establishment of an open-ended ad hoc intergovernmental panel on forests.

12. In its decision 1995/235 of 17 July 1995, the Council took note of the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session 2/ and endorsed the recommendations of the Commission contained in chapter I, sections A, E and F thereof.

13. In paragraph 204 of its report the Commission, inter alia, decided to establish an open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, under its aegis. The mandate, modalities for its establishment and terms of reference of the Panel are contained in annex I to chapter I, section D.5, of the Commission's report.

14. On the basis of the review of the Panel's mandate, modalities and terms of reference as well as its indicative programme of work during the period 1995-1997, it had been understood that the Panel would have one session in 1995, two sessions in 1996 and one session in 1997. The substantive support to the Panel would be provided by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the Secretariat and would be equivalent to 24 Professional and 24 General Service work-months per year (12 Professional and 12 General Service work-months in 1995), to be financed from extrabudgetary resources. The conference servicing would be provided in all official languages of the United Nations.

15. In its decision 1995/318, the Council approved the request of the open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests to extend the duration of its second session, to be held at Geneva in 1996, from one week to two weeks and also approved the request of the Panel that its third session be of two weeks duration and be held in 1996 at a venue to be determined.

16. In connection with the above activities the following should be noted. In its decision 1993/207 of 12 February 1993, the Council had recommended that the General Assembly make "the necessary provisions so that travel expenses for one of the representatives of each Member State elected to the Commission on Sustainable Development participating in a session of the Commission or its

subsidiary organs would be paid from the regular budget of the United Nations". The General Assembly made provision for the payment of travel expenses to representatives attending the two sessions of the Commission scheduled for 1993, in the context of the approval of revised appropriations for the biennium 1992-1993 as a result of the restructuring of the Secretariat. A similar provision has been made in the 1994-1995 programme budget and proposed in the 1996-1997 proposed programme budget for the activities of the Commission and its intersessional working groups. By virtue of its mandate, the Panel is a subsidiary body of the Commission.

17. It should also be noted that the Committee on Conferences, in considering the draft calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 1996-1997, as contained in its report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, 3/ recommended, inter alia, that the General Assembly approve the change of location for the second session of the Panel from New York, as the established headquarters of the Panel, to Geneva, and grant an exception to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985.

18. With regard to the third session of the Panel in 1996 at a venue to be determined, the holding of that session away from New York, as the established headquarters of the body, would again require an exception to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 40/243.

19. On the above basis, the costs of the activities of the Panel would be as follows:

	1995 $	1996-1997 $
Travel of members of the Commission to attend the Panel's meetings	132 500	408 800
Substantive support (extrabudgetary)	314 900	682 800
Conference-servicing requirements	320 600	998 700

20. The requirements for travel of the members of the Commission to attend the Panel's meeting held in September 1995 ($132,500) have been absorbed from within the overall 1994-1995 provision for travel of members of the Commission. The requirements for the biennium 1996-1997 ($408,800) represent additional requirements not provided for under section 7A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. 1/ The substantive support to the activities of the Panel would be financed from voluntary contributions through the Trust Fund for Support of the Work of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

21. Under the terms of section V, paragraph 2 of annex I to chapter I, section D.5 of the report of the Commission, 2/ in the context of its approval of the mandate and the modalities for operation of the Panel, inter alia, expressed the view that operation of the Panel would require funding from extrabudgetary resources to support participation in its meetings of developing country representatives and major groups from developing countries.

22. In connection with the above it should be recalled that in the context of agenda item 115, Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the General Assembly has before it at its current session reports of the Secretary-General on travel and relating expenses (A/C.5/47/61 and Corr.1 and A/C.5/48/14) which, inter alia, addressed the issue of arrangements for financing of participation of representatives of developing countries in meetings of the United Nations organs on which a decision of the General Assembly would be required. The issue of financing of participation of the developing countries representatives in the activities of the Panel could be considered and acted upon in the context of that general review of travel and relating expenses by the Fifth Committee at the current session of the General Assembly.

Decision 1995/302 A. Payment of honoraria to members of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

23. In its decision 1995/302 A of 25 July 1995, the Council, recalling its decision 1993/297 of 28 July 1993, in which it endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that payment should be authorized to each member of the Committee of an honorarium equivalent to that payable to the members of other relevant treaty bodies, such as the Human Rights Committee, noted that no action had yet been taken on the matter by the General Assembly in response to that decision. In order to avoid continuing delays the Council urged the Assembly to give speedy attention to the matter.

24. It will be recalled in connection with the above decision that, by its decision 47/460 B of 6 May 1993, the General Assembly had deferred to its forty-eighth session the review of the whole question of honorariums payable to members of the organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations. Since then the Assembly has not taken a decision on the issue. In the situation no request for an additional provision for payment of honorariums to the Committee members during the biennium 1996-1997 is made at this stage. Should the Assembly decide otherwise, a provision in the amount of $112,000 would be required for the purpose.

Decision 1995/304. General review of arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations

25. By its decision 1995/304 of 26 July 1995, the Council decided: (a) to extend the mandate of the Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Arrangements for Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations for a period of one year, with a meeting time of not less than two weeks, and requested the Working Group to submit its final report to the Council at its substantive session of 1996 and (b) that, starting in 1996, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations should meet annually and, as required, on an ad hoc basis, should that be necessary for the prompt discharge of its duties.

26. The extension of the mandate of the Working Group and the annualization of work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations would entail additional conference-servicing requirements for the biennium 1996-1997 in the amount of $643,000 estimated on full-cost basis.

III. CONCLUSIONS

27. In summary, the requests contained in the resolutions and decisions discussed above would give rise to additional substantive requirements for the biennium 1996-1997 totalling $619,000. These relate to the following sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997:

Resolution/ decision	Title	Section 7A	Section 13	Section 21	Total
1995/27	Implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders	-	80 000	-	80 000
1995/39	Annual sessions of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	-	-	130 200	130 200
1995/235	Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development	408 800	-	-	408 800

28. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Further, each statement of programme budget implications and each proposal for revised estimates should contain alternatives to the financing from the contingency fund of the proposed new activities.

29. With regard to the additional requirements of $619,000 it was not possible to identify the activities within sections 7A, 13 and 21 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium to finance the costs of the activities under that resolution.

30. With regard to conference-servicing requirements of $3,004,500 for the biennium 1996-1997, they have been estimated on a full cost basis. These requirements will be dealt with within the overall provisions for the conference-servicing of the United Nations meetings and conferences, reserved in the proposed programme budget. The actual conference-servicing costs of the meetings will be reported to the General Assembly in the context of the budget performance report for the biennium 1996-1997.

31. In summary, subject to the guidelines for use and operation of the contingency fund the additional appropriation for 1996-1997 is requested as follows:

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Section 7A.	Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development	408 800
Section 13.	Crime control	80 000
Section 21.	Human rights	130 000
Total		619 000

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/50/6/Rev.1), vol. I.

2/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 12 (E/1995/32).

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/50/32).